

**ABERCARN  
URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL**



**ANNUAL REPORT**  
**OF THE**  
**MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH**  
**AND**  
**PUBLIC HEALTH INSPECTOR**  
**FOR THE YEAR 1969**



# ABERCARN URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL.

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## Councillors:

Chairman	-	-	Councillor L. S. Gulliford.
Vice-Chairman	-	-	Councillor W. H. Davies.
Councillor J. C. Pearce.		„	A. P. Griffiths.
„ F. Edwards, B.E.M.		„	Ellis H. Williams,
„ A. Barton.			J.P.
„ O. Thorne		„	F. Matthews
„ P. J. James		„	R. J. Robson
„ H. B. Connolly		„	F. G. Perkins
„ H. J. Reed.		„	F. Knight.
„ R. Pidgeon		„	W. C. H. Ford.
„ J. Strange.			

## Officers:

Clerk & Solicitor	-	-	F. Mervyn Davies
Treasurer & Chief Financial Officer	-	-	T. H. Dixon.
Engineer & Surveyor	-	-	C. C. Hardwick.
Housing Engineer	-	-	D. F. Davies.
Medical Officer of Health	-	-	Dr. K. E. Howells.
Chief Public Health Officer	-	-	Lloyd G. Hale.

To the Chairman and Members of the Council,

Once again it affords me the greatest possible pleasure to submit the Annual Report for 1969, for your consideration.

During the year there were 290 live births and 234 deaths, despite this natural increase of 56 there was a rise in the population of only 40.

One would have thought that, with the completion of the Homeleigh and Croespenmaen Estates, and the housing by the National Coal Board of non-residents in Council houses allocated to them, this figure, or population rise of 40, would have been greater.

I am sure that all concerned will await the census population figures for 1971. I am given to understand that this will take place in April of next year. There must be growth, population-wise, in the decade that has passed.

The birth rate for the area was 15.5, which is slightly higher than last year, and compares with a rate of 16.3 for England and Wales. Twenty of the live births were illegitimate, 7% of the total, which is 1% less than the national average. The stillbirth rate was 10, per thousand live and still births, compared with 13, per thousand, for England and Wales. As far as I can ascertain this would seem to be the lowest stillbirth figure ever recorded for the Urban District. The infant mortality rate has fallen compared with last year, but is still higher than that for England and Wales. Often it is a matter of chance whether a baby is still born, or lives only a few hours, and the perinatal mortality rate, which includes stillbirths and deaths under one week, takes account of this. The rate for Abercarn was 24, per thousand total births, compared with 23 for England and Wales. There were 4 deaths in infants under 1 week in the District, one of which was from pneumonia, and the other three from birth injury, difficult labour, etc. The maternal mortality rate was again nil.

The crude death rate for the area was 12.5 higher than last year. The adjusted death rate was 15.3, which compares with 11.9 for England and Wales. The largest number of

deaths were again attributable to Heart Disease, 67 in all, 27 of which occurred in the 35-65 age group. Diseases of the Heart and Circulatory System accounted for 47% of all deaths. There were 50 deaths from Cancer, 20 males, 30 females. 35% of the male Cancer deaths were from Cancer of the lung. The only other large group of deaths were from Bronchitis and Emphysema—16 males, 4 females. It may be of interest to note that all these groups, Heart Disease, Cancer of the lung, and Bronchitis, show a higher incidence in the smoker than the non-smoker.

Area of Abercarn Urban District Council	9,543
Population ... ..	18,690
Inhabited houses ... ..	6,347
Number of houses owned by Council ...	1,923
Rateable value ... .. 1st April, 1968	£364,336
... .. 1st April, 1969	£370,860
... .. 1st April, 1970	£375,822
Product of Penny Rate ... .. 1967/68	£1,445/0/0
... .. 1968/69	£1,441/0/0
... .. 1969/70	£1,475/0/0
	(Est.)

## VITAL STATISTICS.

### Births.

			1967	1968	1969
Males	...	...	156	147	146
Females	...	...	127	139	144
			<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
			283	286	290
			<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>

Birth Rate of 1,000 of the Population ... 15.5

### Stillbirths.

			1967	1968	1969
Stillbirth rate of 1,000 of					
live and still births...			21.2	17.4	10

# Deaths.

			1967	1968	1969
Males	...	...	122	114	124
Females	...	...	76	92	110
			<hr/> 198 <hr/>	<hr/> 206 <hr/>	<hr/> 234 <hr/>

## VITAL STATISTICS,—1969.

	Abercarn.	Mon. County Council.	England and Wales.
Live births ... ..	290	5,835	797,542
Live birth rate per 1,000 of population ... ..	15.5	16.91	16.3
Stillbirths ... ..	3	92	10,662
Stillbirth rate per 1,000 live and still births ... ..	10	16.17	13
Infant deaths ... ..	7	121	14,397
Infant mortality rate per 1,000 live births—total	24	20.73	18
Infant mortality rate per 1,000 live births— legitimate ... ..	26	21.02	17
Neo Natal (first four weeks) ... ..	14	14.22	12
Death rate per 1,000 of population ... ..	12.5	14	11.9
Number of deaths ... ..	234	4,384	579,463
Mid year population (estimated) ... ..	18,690	351,990	48,826,800

## FLU EPIDEMIC—WINTER, 1969-70

Members of the Council will recall that I had occasion to report, very briefly, in January last, on the flu epidemic of last winter; briefly, because the full information was not then available, for a variety of reasons.

Figures available now suggest that over eight million persons were reported as suffering from Hong Kong flu, Hong Kong, because Dr. Chang of Hong Kong isolated the virus responsible for this type of influenza.

The outbreak was severe in extent, commencing at the beginning of December, and reaching a climax in the next seven weeks. It is estimated that  $12\frac{1}{2}\%$  of the workers, or, well over one million persons, out of a total of some eight million, went off sick from their place of work, with this particular type of influenza.

Well over one hundred and twenty thousand extra hospital admissions were recorded, especially where complications arose through other chest complaints, such as bronchitis and asthma. At the peak, almost four and a half thousand patients died, during what was certainly the most virulent attack of all the influenzal epidemics to date.

The total cost to the country is still to be finalised, however, some costs and other figures are well worth mentioning. Thirty million working days lost, lost production, lost everything. The cost to the nation was some one hundred and thirty million pounds, and added to this must be the costs of drugs, doctors' salaries, hospital costs, etc.

To conclude, every endeavour must be made to find a cocktail vaccine to ensure that we are never again subjected to such costs, pain, discomfort, suffering and disruption of services, together with the falling off of production levels.

Surely, we cannot be far away from this vaccine, Gentlemen. Prevention is better, and certainly easier, financially, than curing an epidemic of this nature.



## INFANTILE MORTALITY.

### Number of Deaths under One Year:

			1967	1968	1969
Boys	...	...	5	7	5
Girls	...	...	2	2	2
			<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
			7	9	7
			<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>

Infantile Mortality Rate: 24

### CAUSES OF INFANT DEATHS AT VARIOUS AGES.

				0 to 1 week.	1 to 4 weeks.	4 weeks to one year
ALL CAUSES	...	...	...	4	—	3
Measles	...	...	...	—	—	—
Diphtheria	...	...	...	—	—	—
Whooping Cough	...	...	...	—	—	—
Influenza	...	...	...	—	—	—
Cerebral Spinal Fever	...	...	...	—	—	—
Cancer (Malignant Disease)	...	...	...	—	—	—
Syphilis	...	...	...	—	—	—
Tuberculosis	...	...	...	—	—	—
Bronchitis	...	...	...	—	—	—
Pneumonia	...	...	...	1	—	2
Other Respiratory Diseases	...	...	...	—	—	—
Diarrhoea	...	...	...	—	—	—
Congenital Anomalies	...	...	...	—	—	—
Premature Births	...	...	...	—	—	—
Birth Injury, Difficult Labour, etc.	...	...	...	3	—	—
Digestive Diseases	...	...	...	—	—	—
Other Endocrine, etc., Diseases	...	...	...	—	—	—
Other Diseases of Nervous System, etc.	...	...	...	—	—	—
Violence	...	...	...	—	—	—
Benign and Unspecified Neoplasms	...	...	...	—	—	1
Other Causes of Perinatal Mortality	...	...	...	—	—	—
				<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
				4	—	3
				<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>



## THE NATIONAL HEALTH ACT.

### Some thoughts on its future.

It is a long, long time since Lloyd George included fourpence per week for a National Insurance Stamp, the scheme enabling workers to have some small benefit from the State when they went sick.

Little did Lloyd George (or was the scheme the brain child of William Beveridge) realise what a giant scheme it would ultimately become, in sixty years' time. Very few alive today know that this was the beginning of the Welfare State.

Old Age Pensioners got five shillings per week, after reaching seventy years of age, providing their income did not exceed eight shillings per week. These pensions were graded down to as little as one shilling per week, if the total household means exceeded eleven shillings. The annual cost? The unheard of sum of six million pounds per annum.

Thus, from this inauspicious beginning, we watched the embryo grow, towards the dream of Bevan's attempt to create a free health service. Here again, it is only fair to add that William Beveridge played a major part in preparing the blue print, for a new, bigger, better, free health service. The cost in 1947 was estimated at one hundred and seventy million pounds per annum. Further it was thought that in twenty years time, the cost would be running at approximately the same amount, little did any one realise the cost would be approaching two thousand million per year.

Today, as you are aware, the National Health Scheme, with all its imperfections, is truly the envy of the whole world. Even so, the cost now is reaching national defence cost proportions. As astronomic as this cost is, I am reliably informed that this was just the cost of eleven weeks of the last war, when it was raging at its peak. So the price of a freely operated National Health Service, at the cost of two thousand million per annum, is cheap, when the cost of a small portion of the last war is taken into account.

Yet I am certain that with prudent spending savings could be effected. Why not split the country into zones. The zones could be of equal size, or, better still, if the number of hospital beds in each zone were pro rata to per thousand head of the population in each zone, only then could fair comparisons be made, otherwise they would be odious.

Then costing comparisons, and exacting judgements could be made, manufacturing interests bought by non-residents of this country, before the passing of the Act, could well be bought by the government, thus stopping huge pharmaceutical profits leaving the country every year. Again, the experts could work out what is a fair return on capital outlay; research on drugs, the cost of this research, the field testing cost, before its being safely placed on the market, to be prescribed by the General Practitioner.

Savings in this way could amount to at least ten million pounds a year. How many kidney, or the more complicated heart machines, could be bought for hospitals, in such desperate need of these machines.

To conclude, I feel sure that Members of the Council could devise ways and means of saving money out of this huge sum, not money to be merely saved, but saved, in order that it may be spent elsewhere, within the vast field covered by the National Health Act, 1946.

Othello was not right when he said:

"Who steals my purse steals trash,  
'Tis something nothing and has been slave  
to thousands."

To rob or take away part of this national purse, which holds two thousand million pounds per year, is not trash, and ought seriously to be looked into.

**ACUTE RESPIRATORY DISEASES—DEATHS.**

			1967	1968	1969
Bronchitis	...	...	20	20	20
Pneumonia	...	...	5	6	9
Other Forms	...	...	1	1	2
			—	—	—
			26	27	31
			—	—	—

## CANCER DEATHS.

			1967	1968	1969
Males	...	...	24	17	20
Females	...	...	14	8	30
			—	—	—
			38	25	50
			—	—	—

### Infectious Diseases.

The Principal Notifiable Diseases are Smallpox, Typhoid, Typhus, Measles, Scarlet Fever, Diphtheria, Whooping Cough, Puerperal Fever, Ophthalmia Neonatorum and Continued Fever.

There were no deaths from the Principal Notifiable Diseases during 1969.

# CAUSES OF DEATH, 1969.

1968				1969	
M.	F.			M.	F.
114	92	ALL CAUSES	... ..	124	110
		Other Infective and Parasitic Diseases		1	—
		Malignant Neoplasm, Buccal Cavity, etc.		2	—
		Malignant Neoplasm, Oesophagus	...	—	2
		Malignant Neoplasm, Stomach	...	7	3
		Malignant Neoplasm, Intestine	...	—	6
		Malignant Neoplasm, Lung, Bronchus ..		7	1
		Malignant Neoplasm, Breast	...	—	6
		Malignant Neoplasm, Uterus	... ..	—	4
		Other Malignant Neoplasms	...	4	8
		Benign and Unspecified Neoplasms	...	1	1
		Diabetes Mellitus	... ..	1	4
		Anaemias	... ..	—	1
		Mental Disorders	... ..	2	1
		Hypertensive Disease	... ..	6	1
		Ischaemic Heart Disease	... ..	34	20
		Other Forms of Heart Disease	...	5	8
		Cerebrovascular Disease	... ..	14	23
		Other Diseases of Circulatory System...		7	2
		Influenza	... ..	1	2
		Pneumonia	... ..	5	4
		Bronchitis and Emphysema	... ..	16	4
		Other Diseases of Respiratory System...		1	1
		Cirrhosis of Liver	... ..	2	—
		Other Diseases of Digestive System	...	1	—
		Other Diseases, Genito-Urinary System		1	2
		Diseases of Musculo-Skeletal System...		1	—
		Birth Injury, Difficult Labour, etc.	...	2	1
		Symptoms and Ill-defined Conditions...		1	1
		Motor Vehicle Accidents	... ..	1	—
		All Other Accidents	... ..	1	4

*"Into the lean and slipper'd pantaloon,  
With spectacles on nose and pouch on side,  
His youthful hose, well sav'd, a world too wide."*

*(contd).*

*As You Like It.*

*Shakespeare.*

## THE SENIOR CITIZENS IN AN AGEING POPULATION.

As your Medical Officer, I view, with great anxiety, the problems created by the ever increasing, ageing population.

Medical science, improved standards of living, in this must be included housing, are obviously responsible for this phenomenon, that almost one thousand persons each day reach pensionable age.

Immediately after the First World War, 6% of the population were over sixty-five, today, the rate is 13% of the population. By the end of this century it is thought that the figure will have risen to 16%, to put it another way, as it affects us, almost three thousand out of approximately nineteen thousand will be senior citizens.

The aged of today, although infinitely better off than their forebears, still suffer from poverty, and malnutrition, in very many cases. Much, very much more still needs to be done for the aged. Magnificent as the welfare for the aged is, at the present time, one must forget the valiant efforts made by the voluntary organisations on behalf of the aged.

More specialised housing units are needed, showers perhaps, instead of baths. If baths, make them low down, the aged have difficulty in stepping into the more conventional type of bath. Have baths with handles on the side, have baths made especially wide, not narrow and difficult, have baths with contours on the bottom, why, oh why, must we have narrow slippery bottoms to baths?

People tend in general, to stiffen, and are less supple with advancing age. Give them warmth, both inner and outer. Improve, and enlarge, the 'meals on wheels' service. Twenty-

four lunches are cooked and transported per day to be served to the aged locally. Twenty-four lunches per day, I ask you! May I apologise if my remarks appear offensive to those engaged on this voluntary work.

Let us all work harder, let us organise a little better, let us spend a little more, on the aged. Perhaps, perhaps, the extra national costs, could be found by giving away less abroad. After all, charity, it is said, begins at home.

“For his shrunk shank; and his big manly voice,  
Turning again toward childish trebble, pipes  
And whistles in his sound.”

*As You Like It.*

*Shakespeare*

In 1990 it is estimated that the population will be approximately sixty-five million, and that the aged will have reached a total of some thirteen million, or one in five of the total population.

Indeed, we have come a long, long way from the hated workhouses, where the aged were kept and budgetted for, for as little as tuppence per day.

Today, we have moved far away from those hurtful, awful days, to the splendid flatlets, maisonettes, with communal television room, loosely supervised by a warden and his wife. Holidays at cut prices, even free holidays, are all arranged for the senior citizen. Special evening concerts, bus tours, and a thousand and one different ideas are successfully mooted, throughout the country, to make the aged feel they belong, that they are wanted, that the sixth age of man is not yet for them, at least not for the time being.

Even though the above paragraph may make it seem that the aged already have a paradise, a utopia on earth, we, who are closely associated with them, know that this is not so. A great deal needs to be done, action not words, deeds not talk, in order that the senior citizen may feel wanted, that life, ah even in the sixth age is worth while. Let us all make them feel that retirement at the age of sixty-five does not mean;

“Second childhood, and mere oblivion:

Sans teeth; sans eyes, sans taste; sans everything.”



*"Few and short were the prayers we said,  
And we spoke not a word of sorrow;  
But we steadfastly gazed on the face that was dead,  
And we bitterly thought of the morrow."*

Wolfe.

## ANALYSIS OF INFECTIOUS DISEASES IN AGE GROUPS.

Diseases.	Under 1	1-2	2-3	3-4	4-5	5-10	10-15	15-20	20-35	35-45	45-65	65 plus	Age Unknown	Total
Scarlet Fever...	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	1
Diphtheria ...	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Measles ...	5	5	7	3	10	30	3	1	—	—	—	—	—	64
Erysipelas ...	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Whooping Cough	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Puerperal Pyrexia ...	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Ophthalmia Neonatorum	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Dysentery ...	2	—	3	—	—	2	—	—	2	—	4	1	—	14
Pneumonia ...	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Infective Hepatitis ...	—	—	—	—	—	4	—	—	1	1	—	—	—	6
Total ...	7	5	10	3	10	36	3	2	3	1	4	1	—	85

Total number of infectious diseases in age groups: 85.

## NUMBER OF CASES OF INFECTIOUS DISEASES NOTIFIED DURING THE PAST FOUR YEARS.

	1966	1967	1968	1969
Scarlet Fever ...	1	1	—	1
Dysentery ...	2	—	—	14
Diphtheria ...	—	—	—	—
Cerebral Spinal Fever ...	—	—	—	—
Pneumonia ...	1	—	—	—
Poliomyelitis ...	—	—	—	—
Meningitis ...	—	—	—	1
Tuberculosis ...	10	2	—	5
Whooping Cough ...	5	9	—	—
Erysipelas ...	—	—	—	—
Ophthalmia Neonatorum	—	—	—	—
Puerperal Pyrexia ...	—	—	—	—
Food poisoning ...	1	—	—	150
Paratyphoid Fever ...	—	—	—	—
Measles ...	286	98	7	64
Infective Hepatitis ...	—	—	11	6
	306	110	18	241



*"We carved not a line and we raised not a stone,  
But we left him alone with his glory."*

Wolfe.

### VACCINATION—SMALLPOX.

Vaccination for the year totalled: 73

#### (1) Number of Persons Vaccinated (or re-vaccinated) during the period.

Age at date of vaccination	Under 1	2—4	4—15	15 or over	Total
Number vaccinated ...	25	36	7	—	68
Number re-vaccinated ..	—	1	4	—	5

#### (2) Number of Cases Specially Reported during Period (Age Groups as above).

(a) Generalised Vaccinia	—	—	—	—	—	—
(b) Post-vaccinal Encephalo- myelitis	—	—	—	—	—	—
(c) Death from complications of vaccination other than (a) or (b)	—	—	—	—	—	—

### TRIPLE IMMUNISATION—WHOOPIING COUGH TETANUS, DIPHTHERIA.

The following table is submitted for your information:

Age at date of Immunisation	Under 1	1-2	2-4	4-8	Under 16	Total
Number Immunised	132	33	2	9	4	180
Number Re-immunised	3	53	7	220	—	283

Immunisation for the year totalled: 463.

## INFANT WELFARE CENTRES ATTENDANCES.

Attendances at the Infant Welfare Centre for the year 1969 are set out in the following table for your information:

Centre	Under 1	1968	1963-67
Cwmcarn ...	46	51	143
Abercarn ...	35	37	117
Pantside ...	48	49	90
Newbridge ...	100	102	216
Trinant ...	78	49	47

Centre	Over 1		Over 2	Total
	Under 1	Under 2	Under 5	
Cwmcarn ...	355	426	470	1,251
Abercarn ...	251	304	335	890
Pantside ...	286	235	227	748
Newbridge ...	968	967	860	2,795
Trinant ...	1,266	681	342	2,289
Attendances at the Cwmcarn Centre ...				1,251
Attendances at the Abercarn Centre ...				890
Attendances at the Pantside Centre ...				748
Attendances at the Newbridge Centre ...				2,795
Attendances at the Trinant Centre ...				2,289

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Total attendances for the year 1969 ... 7,973

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## SUMMARY OF TUBERCULOSIS CASES.

			Pulmonary		Non-Pulmonary		Total
			M.	F.	M.	F.	
Total Cases on Register							
31-12-68	...	...	51	60	4	6	121
New Cases, 1969	...	...	2	3	—	—	5
Deaths	...	...	2	—	—	—	2
Recovered	...	...	—	1	—	—	1
Removed for other							
Reasons	...	...	5	—	1	—	6
Removed from District	...	...	—	—	—	—	—
<hr/>							
Total Cases on Register							
31-12-69	...	...	46	62	3	6	117
<hr/>							

*"Like our shadows,  
Our wishes lengthen as our sun declines.  
While man is growing life is in decrease :  
And cradles rock no nearer to the tomb.  
Our birth is nothing but our death begun."*  
Night Thoughts.

**Annual Return of Food Poisoning Out-Breaks in the Area of  
the Abercarn Urban District Council for the year  
1st January, to 31st December, 1969.**

In accordance with the Circular 46/49 (Wales) dated 24th May, 1949, Returns as per Memo. 188/MED. (Appendix I) are submitted herewith.

**Annual Return of Food Poisoning Notifications (corrected).**

Local Authority Abercarn Urban District Council, year  
1st January, 1969, to 31st December, 1969.

**(2nd) Food Poisoning Notification Corrected Return to R.G.**

1st Qtr.	2nd Qtr.	3rd Qtr.	4th Qtr.	Total
59	62	37	1	159

**(3rd) Outbreaks due to identified Agents.**

Total Outbreaks ... Nil                      Total Cases ... Nil

**(3rd A) Outbreaks due to Salmonella Organisms ... Nil**

**(4th) Outbreaks of Undiscovered Cause.**

Total Outbreaks ... 28                      Total Cases ... 74

**(5th) Outbreaks.**

Single Cases	...	...	...	...	85
Agent Identified		...	...	...	Nil
Unknown Cases		...	...	...	85

**SUMMARY OF FOOD POISONING OUTBREAKS.**

During the first, second and third quarters of the year, one hundred and fifty-eight cases of food poisoning were notified to the department.

Not unnaturally, such a large number of cases caused concern to myself, the County Medical Officer of Health, and my Health Inspectors.

The illness was of very short duration, lasting no longer than forty-eight hours, in some cases the patient, or patients, suffered mild diarrhoea, and sometimes were slightly sick. In a number of cases, twenty to thirty, the patients had recovered, and returned to work, before the inspectors arrived.

In no single case was bacteriological confirmation possible.

Your Medical Officer is satisfied that everything possible was done to obtain a positive result, or rather, bacteriological confirmation. Samples of ice-cream, water, milk and fæces were submitted to the Chief Bacteriologist, to no avail.

Towards the end of the third quarter of the year, the notifications petered out, leaving a very relieved, if somewhat dissatisfied, staff to mull over this considerable outbreak.

*"Never had any mother? What do you mean?  
Where were you born? Never was born  
persisted Topsy.."*

*Uncle Tom's Cabin.*

## **GENERAL PROVISIONS OF THE HEALTH SERVICE.**

*Medical Officer of Health :*

Dr. K. E. Howells, M.B., B.S. (London), D.P.H.

*Chief Public Health Officer :*

Lloyd G. Hale, F.R.S.H.

### **Maternity and Child Welfare Services.**

These services are maintained by the County Council at Cwmearn, Abercarn, Newbridge, Panside and Trinant.

### **Isolation Hospitals.**

There are no Isolation Hospitals in the Council's Area, but arrangements have been made for Infectious Diseases cases to be admitted to the Allt-yr-yn Hospital, Newport.

### **Immunisation against Diphtheria.**

It is now the duty of the County Council to administer this service. This duty is performed by their Area Medical Officers.

### **Ambulance Service.**

Under the provision of the National Health Service Act, 1946, the County Council now administer the Ambulance Service.

### **Bacteriological Examination of Pathological Specimens.**

Samples of Milk, Ice-Cream, Water and samples from the Council's Swimming Baths were submitted to the Laboratory at Clytha Square, Newport, for examination during the year.

The department must, at this juncture, place on record the real feeling of loss at the retirement of Mr. Lowe from the Public Health Service Laboratory at Clytha Square.

AMBIGUITY :

*"I shall be like that tree,  
I shall die at the top."*

*Life of Swift.*

At no time, over a period of twenty years, has he been other than most helpful to the department, always listening attentively, and then giving his judgement and advice.

The department in all conscience, must pay tribute to the help given, and advice offered, in the food poisoning outbreak at Trinant during 1969.

Heavy calls and demands were made, by the department, last year, upon the silent but excellent Service, in many other aspects of our work. It is difficult to imagine how it would be possible to operate without the help of such a Service.

### **Bacteriological Examination of Water Supplies, Milk and Ice-Cream.**

During the year one hundred and thirty-three samples were taken to the Laboratory. A breakdown of these figures shows that ninety-six were faecal in origin, and were submitted in an attempt to find out the organisms responsible for the food poisoning outbreak in Trinant.

There were also twenty-three milk samples, two of which failed the Methylene Blue Test. Upon further samples being taken, however, these proved to be satisfactory.

Additionally, eight water samples were taken, while the remaining six were ice-cream samples. Both these were found to be satisfactory, from a bacteriological point of view.

### **Water Supplies.**

The Council is a constituent Authority of the Gwent Water Board. The chief supply is obtained from Grwyne-Fawr Reservoir situated in the Black Mountains, Breconshire, subsidiary supplies are obtained from local sources. The water is of good quality and large supplementary quantities were obtained from Llanover scheme. The water is sampled by the



Board, and from time to time by the Local Authority (who submit samples for bacteriological examination). Where necessary the supplies were chlorinated by the Board's Officials.

Number of houses with piped supply	...	6,336
Number of houses supplied from wells and springs (estimated)	... ..	11
Approximate population supplied from Public Water Mains, direct to house	...	18,657

During the year inspections were made of water supplies and systems generally, where the pressure was reported to be low. Upon inspection it was found that in almost all cases the corrosion of pipes was responsible for inadequate supplies for all domestic purposes. In such cases, Informal Notices and where necessary Statutory Notices under Section 138 of the Public Health Act, 1936, were served with complete success.

### **Sewers and Drains.**

The Council is a constituent Member of the Western Valley Sewerage Board. The Council's subsidiary sewers are connected to the Main Trunk Sewer.

### **Scavenging.**

Scavenging is carried out by direct labour with a twice weekly collection, the tip being situated at Trinant at the northern end of the District.

### **Refuse Disposal.**

Regular inspections in connection with Rodent Control and Fly Breeding have been carried out, and extensive treatments for the elimination of rodents and flies are continually being undertaken.



A THOUGHT TO STAFFING COMMITTEE :

*"I've oft wished that I had clear,  
For life, six hundred pounds a year,  
A handsome house to lodge a friend,  
A river at my garden's end."*

Swift.

**Rainfall.**

The table shows the monthly rainfall, also the day of the month when the greatest fall occurred.

Month	Total Inches of Rainfall	Greatest fall in 24 Hrs. Day	Inches	No. of days of Recorded Rainfall
January ...	7.41	19th	1.40	20
February ...	3.35	23rd	1.02	8
March ...	2.57	12th	1.00	6
April ...	3.05	22nd	0.74	7
May ...	7.42	27th	1.20	13
June ...	3.74	11th	1.30	4
July ...	3.52	13th	3.24	3
August ...	1.90	9th	1.20	3
September	2.87	11th	1.02	7
October ...	1.08	14th	0.51	4
November	4.87	10th	0.90	14
December ...	3.83	20th	1.20	7
Total ...	45.61	—	—	96

Rainfall is recorded at Abercarn Cemetery.

Height above Sea Level: 539.9 feet.

*"I dream't I dwell  
In marble halls."*

## HOUSE IMPROVEMENTS.

After twenty-one years of legislative trial and error, we have the Housing Act, 1969, to contend with.

I remember well, the coming into force of the provisions that gave local authorities power to give public funds to applicants for improving their homes, under the Housing Act, 1949. These provisions were called Discretionary Grants, and gave, at the discretion of the local authority, power for funds to be used for the modernisation of old, but sound, houses.

We worked hard, and after a decade stood back and took a long look at the number of houses modernised. Statistically we were disappointed, area-wise, we felt pleased with our efforts.

We were disappointed for, in the main, the applicants were almost all owner/occupiers, landlords hardly ever applied to modernise rented property, although it was possible to have four hundred pounds free, as a maximum grant. Even though the landlord would expend a further four hundred pounds, making eight hundred in all, on his property, he was entitled, legally, to increase the rent by some eight per cent., a fair return on his money, I would have thought!

At this time, 1959, the government realised that there were thousands of disused bedrooms in houses, which could be converted into bathrooms. Again, financial ceiling figures were set, and powers were, accordingly, given to local authorities to grant such applications, i.e., for turning bedrooms into bathrooms. For a time the figures for this type of conversion went well, but, where, oh where, were the applications from the owners of rented properties?

The Housing Act, 1961, was famous for its omissions, but one short section said, for eight per cent. read twelve and a half per cent. Again, after nearly a decade the result must be said to be disappointing.

The Housing Act, 1964, accelerated procedure. Why bother with individual applications? Declare the whole street suitable for Improvement. Local authorities killed this scheme, by refusing to use their powers. Let us go further, and say that the officers dealing with Improvement Grants, Areas, etc., up and down the country, nearly all showed a masterly inactivity at this time, and once again the total Improvement Areas in the country were disappointing.

The Housing Act, 1969, was awaited with increasing interest. The financial ceilings were raised, in regard to Discretionary and Standard Grants. Discretionary ceilings were imposed in 1949, at four hundred pounds, as a maximum. The Act of 1969 increased this to one thousand pounds, perhaps too much, or have building costs increased two hundred and fifty per cent. in twenty years?

Improvement repairs mean almost all the repairs to be done to the house during modernisation. In addition, all the defective electric wiring can be renewed, as part of an Improvement Grant.

In the opinion of the department, the expression "improvement repairs" is certainly defined too widely, inasmuch as literally everything is included. It would appear that the only thing that does not rank for grant aid is the taking down of partition walls, and the construction of glass panels and sliding doors. This type of improvement is carried out where the rooms on the ground floor are particularly small.

Undoubtedly, defective roofs, window frames, and all the other one hundred and one defects that can arise in a house, will now be patched up, and will have no permanence. The applicant will take advantage of the Housing Act, 1969, to re-roof his house, renew his guttering and rainwater down pipes, renew his drainage system and windows, and also rewire his house, where the wiring has become dangerous, while the very many other items of disrepair can be incorporated as house improvements. The gable end, or the front and rear elevation walls, can be rendered up and rough casted, pebble dashed, as the case may be, where it is shown that there is evidence of the penetration of through dampness.

The department is also of the opinion that in the next decade, if costs are accurately compiled, and produced for comparison purposes, it will be shown that there will be very little difference between the cost of improvement repairs, and the improvements, that is to say, the twelve points that were set out, as a standard for improvements, in the Housing Act, 1949.

### **Housing.**

Once again, the year 1969, passed by without any addition to our housing stock.

The replacing of the Arcon Bungalows at Pentwynmawr (50), opened up the possibilities of exciting re-development as would the redevelopment of Princess Crescent at Trinant (38). All this, together with the development of the Narzareth Site at Cwmcarn, and the limited Site at Glanbrynar, Pentwynmawr, would go a long way towards solving our housing needs.

The rehousing of the thirty-two, of a total of thirty-eight families, in Princess Crescent coupled, with the rehousing of forty-seven families living in forty-five houses, at Celynen Terrace, made heavy inroads into the Council's available housing units during the year.

Without the splendid co-operation of the National Coal Board, who rehoused a number of families from Celynen Terrace, the progress made during the year would have been somewhat smaller in extent.

At the time of preparing this report, Princess Crescent, is almost empty, as is Celynen Terrace. Princess Crescent and Celynen Terrace can then be demolished, in toto. Although, not to confuse the issue, it must be remembered, that the Hawksley Bungalows, a total of thirty-two to date have already been taken down. The Ranks, at Abercarn, are slowly being emptied, and informally closed, by the Council.

The redevelopment of Princess Crescent, and the Narzareth Site at Cwmcarn, is awaited with growing interest by the Council. Most certainly there is no indication, at the time of the preparation of this report, that the Council are over-building, and will find it difficult to let these new housing units.

# NOT ALL ! ARE ALSO RANS

*"Let not ambition mock their useful toil,  
Their homely joys, and destiny obscure,  
Nor grandeur hear with a disdainful smile,  
The short and simple annals of the poor."*

Gray.

The following complaints were received during the year and remedied, these are set out for your information.

## Exterior. 1969

Chimney stacks rebuilt or repaired	...	...	26
Chimney stacks sealed off	...	...	16
Roofs repaired or renewed	...	...	63
Rainwater pipes and eaves gutters renewed or repaired	...	...	49
Walls—rebuilt or repaired	...	...	47
rendered for the prevention of dampness			31
external plastering repaired	...	...	73
damp proof courses inserted	...	...	15
Outbuildings repaired	...	...	4
Obstructive outbuildings demolished	...	...	14
Yards, passages, etc., paved or repaired	...	...	12

## Interior.

Doors and frames renewed or repaired...	...	51
Floors renewed or repaired	...	49
Floors ventilated	...	12
Grates or ovens renewed or repaired	...	17
Internal plastering (walls) repaired or replastered	...	226
Internal plastering (ceilings) repaired or replastered	...	49
Larders provided	...	6
Larders improved or repaired	...	13
Staircases repaired	...	4
Windows and frames renewed or repaired	...	128
Window cords renewed	...	32



“Oh good old man, how well in thee appears  
The constant service of the antique world,  
When service sweat for duty, not for mead.” (contd)  
As You Like It,  
Shakespeare.

### Drainage.

New drains constructed	...	...	...	4
Drains cleansed	...	...	...	67
Drains reconstructed	...	...	...	13
Drains repaired	...	...	...	33
Gullies fixed	...	...	...	8
Inspection chambers provided or repaired	...			11
Lavatory basins or baths waste pipes trapped or repaired	...	...	...	14
Soil pipes or ventilating shafts fixed or repaired	...	...	...	3
Waste water sinks trapped or waste pipes repaired				23

### Water Closets.

Water closet buildings repaired	...	...	13
Seats, doors renewed or repaired	...	...	16
Water closets reconstructed	...	...	18
New W.C. pans and traps fixed	...	...	13
Flushing apparatus provided	...	...	4
Flushing apparatus repaired	...	...	9

### Miscellaneous Repairs and Nuisances Abated.

Storage accommodation provided or improved			24
Water supply provided	...	...	3
Water taps or pipes repaired	...	...	16
Fascia boards renewed or repaired	...	...	14
Skirting boards renewed or repaired	...	...	45
Waste water sinks provided	...	...	9
Joints raked out and repointed	...	...	53
Other repairs and nuisances abated	...	...	29
Total	...	...	1,379

*"Thou art not for the fashion of these times  
Where none will sweat but for promotion,  
And having that, do choke their service up."  
As You Like It,  
Shakespeare.*

## Housing.

Number of dwelling houses inspected	...	948
Re-inspected	... ..	621
Number of premises at which repairs and improve- ments have been carried out	... ..	732
Warning Notices	... ..	242
Remedied without Notice	... ..	212
Statutory Notices served	... ..	154
Statutory Notices complied with	... ..	154
Statutory Notices not complied with	... ..	Nil
Number of houses in the area	... ..	6,347
Number of dwelling houses erected during the year by the Council	... ..	Nil
Number of new houses erected privately in the year 1969	... ..	50
		(approx.)

## Drainage.

Drainage stoppages dealt with, new drainage con- nections, improvements and repairs	... ..	314
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The following statement is in the form prescribed by the Ministry:—

1. Inspection of dwelling houses during the year:—
  - (1) (a) Total number of dwelling houses inspected during the year for housing defects (under Public Health and Housing Acts) ... 1,121
  - (b) Number of inspections made for the purpose ... .. 1,306
  - (2) (a) Demolition Orders made ... .. 3
  - (b) Closing Orders made ... .. Nil
  - (3) Undertakings accepted not to re-let for human habitation ... .. Nil
  - (4) Closing Orders revoked after premises have been made fit ... .. 3



2.	Remedying of Defects during the year without Service of Formal Notices:	
	Number of dwelling houses rendered fit for occupation in consequence of informal action by the Local Authority or their Officers ...	318
3.	(a) Proceedings under Section 9 and 10 of the Housing Act, 1957 ...	40
	(1) Number of dwelling houses in respect of which notices were served requiring repair ...	40
	(2) Number of dwelling houses which were rendered fit after service of Formal Notice:	
	(a) By Owners ...	154
	(b) By Local Authority in default of Owners ...	Nil
	Number of houses under Circular 2854	Nil
	(b) Proceedings under Public Health Acts:—	
	(1) Number of dwelling houses in respect of which Notices were served requiring repair ...	126
	(2) Number of dwelling houses which were rendered fit ...	126
	(a) By Owners ...	126
	(b) By Local Authority in default of Owners ...	Nil
	(c) Proceedings under Section 16 and 17 of the Housing Act, 1957:—	
	(1) Number of dwelling houses in respect of which Demolition Orders were made ..	3
	(2) Number of dwelling houses demolished in pursuance of Demolition Orders ...	Nil
	(d) Proceedings under Section 18 of the Housing Act, 1957:—	
	(1) Number of separate tenements or under ground rooms in respect of which Closing Orders were determined, the tenements or rooms having been rendered fit ...	Nil

*A favourite has no friend."*

*Gray.*

4. Housing Act, 1957—Part IV. Overcrowding.	
(a) (1) Number of dwellings overcrowded at the end of the year ... ..	19
(2) Number of families dwelling therein...	27
(3) Number of persons dwelling therein ...	98
(b) Number of new cases of overcrowding reported during the year ... ..	1
5. Housing Act, 1957—Clearance Areas.	
(a) Clearance Areas made during the year ...	Nil
(b) Number of houses involved in Clearance Areas	Nil

### **Food Hygiene.**

Very many days, and even weeks, in total, were spent on improving hygiene standards, under the Shops Act, 1950, the Food and Drugs Act, 1955, and subsequent Hygiene Regulations of 1956 and General Regulations made in 1960.

These powers were further enforced by the powers contained in the Offices, Shops and Railway Premises Act, 1963, which were superimposed upon all Acts, and should have had a great effect in improving and adding to the amenities already existing in offices, shops and railway premises, in the Area in particular, and the country as a whole.

Indeed, being so complete, they should now be welcomed with open arms by all Public Health Inspectors.

Last year, as has been reported, some one hundred and fifty-nine cases of food poisoning were notified to your Medical Officer of Health. Continual inspections showed that, apart from the mobile vans, general standards were not unreasonable. Nothing was ever found that could warrant immediate prosecution, under the Food Hygiene Regulations or the Offices, Shops and Railway Premises Act.

However, to keep up and improve the standard means constant inspections, very many visits to each shop, per year, hard work, hard routine work, the sort of work most people

fight shy of. It can be confidently expected that these inspections, and visits, will bring about the higher standards we have come to expect, from shops of all kinds, as we enter the seventies.

### Meat and Other Foods.

A large quantity of tinned and other foods were inspected during the year. The following articles were condemned as being unfit for human consumption:—

112 tins corned beef;	4 portions cheese;
48 lb. corned beef;	18 tins minced steak;
111 tins luncheon meat;	10 tins chopped ham;
108 tins tomatoes;	81 lb. beef;
29 tins stewed steak;	42 lb. lamb;
16 tins strawberries;	16 tins pears;
135 tins beans;	4 tins hamburgers;
136 tins peas;	3 tins grapefruit;
22 tins peaches;	60 tins pressed beef
3 chickens;	(4 lb. each);
2 turkeys;	4 tins loganberries;
6 lb. bacon;	3 tins raspberries;
298 lb. cooked ham;	120 lb. meat (decomposed)
3 tins cream;	7 lb. pork chops;
8 tins soup;	12 tins minced beef;
16 tins salmon;	55 lb. steak;
5 sponges;	11 lb. pork;
3 tins tongue (6 lb. each);	30 lb. livers;
12 lb. tongue;	12 boxes oats;
27 tins milk;	28 lb. fish;
158 lb. butter;	7 lb. flour;
10 tins braised steak;	3 tins gooseberries;
4 tins pilchards;	3 cakes;
4 tins fruit salad;	7 cartons dessert;
70 lb. cheese;	
120 packets of various sizes and commodities condemned as the result of the breakdown of refrigeration.	

TABLE A. REGISTRATIONS AND GENERAL INSPECTIONS.

(1) Class of Premises.	(2) Number of premises registered during the year.	(3) Total number of registered premises at end of year.	(4) Number of registered premises receiving a general inspection during the year
Offices ... ..	2	42	35
Retail Shops ... ..	4	95	80
Wholesale shops, warehouses ...	—	24	20
Catering establishments open to the public, canteens ... ..	—	8	8
Fuel Storage depots ... ..	—	—	—

TABLE B. NUMBER OF VISITS OF ALL KINDS BY INSPECTOR TO REGISTERED PREMISES.

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**TABLE C. ANALYSIS OF PERSONS EMPLOYED IN  
REGISTERED PREMISES BY WORKPLACE.**

Class of Workplace.	Number of persons employed.
(1)	(2)
Offices ... ..	327
Retail Shops ... ..	314
Wholesale departments, warehouses ...	57
Catering establishments open to the public ... ..	60
Canteens ... ..	—
Fuel Storage depots ... ..	—
Total ... ..	758
Total Males ... ..	366
Total Females ...	392

TABLE D. EXEMPTIONS.

M/c Line No.	Class of Workplace (1)	No. of exemptions current at 31st Dec.	No. of exemptions granted or extended during year	No. of applications refused or exemptions withdrawn during year	No. of Cases in Cols. 3 and 4 where employees opposed application	Appeals to Court against refusal to grant or extend an exemption or against the withdrawal of an exemption.	
		(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	No. made (6)	No. allowed (7)
PART I. Space (Sec. 5 (2) ).							
1	Offices ... ..	—	—	—	—	—	—
2	Retail shops ... ..	1	—	—	—	—	—
3	Wholesale shops, warehouses	—	—	—	—	—	—
4	Catering establishments open to public, canteens ... ..	—	—	—	—	—	—
5	Fuel storage depots ... ..	—	—	—	—	—	—
PART II. Temperature (Sec. 6).							
11	Offices ... ..	—	—	—	—	—	—
12	Retail shops ... ..	—	—	—	—	—	—
13	Wholesale shops, warehouses	—	—	—	—	—	—
14	Catering establishments open to public, canteens... ..	—	—	—	—	—	—
15	Fuel storage depots ... ..	—	—	—	—	—	—

TABLE D. EXEMPTIONS (continued).  
PART III. Sanitary Conveniences (Sec. 9).

M/c Line No.	Class of Workplace (1)	No. of exemptions current at 31st Dec. (2)	No. of exemptions granted or extended during year (3)	No. of applications refused or exemptions withdrawn during year (4)	No. of Cases in Cols. 3 and 4 where employees opposed application (5)	Appeals to Court against refusal to grant or extend an exemption or against the withdrawal of an exemption. No. made (6) No. allowed (7)
21	Offices ... ..	—	—	—	—	—
22	Retail shops ... ..	7	—	—	—	—
23	Wholesale shops, warehouses	—	—	—	—	—
24	Catering establishments open to public, canteens ... ..	—	—	—	—	—
25	Fuel storage depots ... ..	—	—	—	—	—

PART IV. Washing Facilities (Sec. 10).

31	Offices ... ..	—	—	—	—	—
32	Retail shops ... ..	4	—	—	—	—
33	Wholesale shops, warehouses	—	—	—	—	—
34	Catering establishments open to public, canteens... ..	—	—	—	—	—
35	Fuel storage depots ... ..	—	—	—	—	—



**TABLE E. PROSECUTIONS.**

**Prosecutions instituted of which the hearing was completed  
in the year.**

Section of Act or title of Regulation or Order.	No. of persons or companies prosecuted	No. of informations laid	No. of informations leading to a conviction
Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil

No. of complaints (or summary applications) made under Section 22	...	...	Nil
No. of interim orders granted	...	...	Nil

*"Too poor for a bribe  
And too proud to importune ;  
He had not the method of making a fortune."*

*Gray.*

## PREVENTION OF DAMAGE BY PESTS ACT, 1949.

Report for 12 months ended 31st December, 1969.

Type of Property	Non-	
	Agricultural	Agricultural
1 Number of properties in District ...	6,460	42
2. (a) Total number of properties (including nearby premises) inspected following notification	308	4
(b) Number infested by (i) Rats	131	1
(ii) Mice	74	1
3. (a) Total number of properties in spected for rats and/or mice for reasons other than notification ... ..	563	19
(b) Number infested by (i) Rats	16	2
(ii) Mice	24	1

### Sewers.

4. Number of sewers infested by rats during the year ... 2

All individual complaints during the year were dealt with, which entailed several visits by the Rodent Operator to one single reported case.

The Council sewers were treated, as is usual, twice during the year. Little activity of rodents can be seen in the sewers, except in the very old parts, where special attention is paid. In particular, careful attention is given to all school canteens, on behalf of the County Council. Regular visits are paid to the Council's rubbish dump at Trinant, and, indeed, all points where complaints were received.

“Said my mother, ‘what is all this story about?’

‘A cock and a bull’, said Yorick.”

Tristan Shandy.

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### Factories and Workshops.

Total number of factories in the area ... 16

Total number of workshops in the area... 23

The factories and workshops are periodically inspected in order that they comply with the Factories Act, 1937.

### Number of Defects

Referred No. of  
to H.M. Prosecutions

Particulars	Found	Remedied	Inspector	cutions
Want of Cleanliness ...	3	3	—	—
Want of Ventilation ...	1	1	—	—
Want of Drainage of floors	—	—	—	—

### Sanitary Accommodation:

Other Nuisances ...	...	1	1	—	—
Insufficient ...	...	1	1	—	—
Unsuitable or Defective ...	...	2	2	—	—
Not separate for sexes ...	...	—	—	—	—
		8	8	—	—

Dr. K. E. HOWELLS, D.P.H. (London),

Medical Officer of Health

LLOYD G. HALE, F.R.S.H.,

Chief Public Health Officer.











